

Committee on Education Pre-K – 12

CS/HB 7069 — Education Accountability

by Education Appropriations Subcommittee; Education Committee; Rep. O'Toole and others (CS/CS/SB 616 by the Appropriations Committee; Education Pre-K – 12 Committee; and Senator Legg)

The bill (Chapter 2015-6, L.O.F.) authorizes school districts to start school as early as August 10 each year and modifies education accountability provisions related to public school student assessment, educator performance evaluations, and school accountability:

Student Assessment

The bill reduces test administration requirements, minimizes the impact of testing on students, and codifies testing schedules and procedures. Specifically, the bill:

- Eliminates prescriptive remediation and progress monitoring requirements, the grade 11 Florida Standards Assessment for English Language Arts (ELA), and the required administration of the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) in high school.
- Limits the amount of time for state-required and district-required test administrations to no more than five percent of total school hours during the school year, with some exceptions.
- Requires school districts to provide student performance results on district-required local assessments to teachers and parents within 30 days of administration, and requires future state testing contracts to provide student performance results on statewide, standardized assessments by the end of the school year.
- Allows districts to determine appropriate local assessments for measuring student performance, including requirements for student growth formulas, and authorizes school districts to use district employees to administer statewide, standardized assessments.
- Codifies the state-approved rollout schedule for statewide, standardized computer-based testing and paper testing options through the 2017-2018 school year, and requires school districts to establish and publish district assessment schedules.
- Requires districts to notify parents of students who score in the bottom quintile on the 2014-2015 grade 3 ELA assessments and provide evidence to enable such students to be promoted.
- Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to collect liquidated damages due in response to the spring 2015 administration of the computer-based assessments of the department's Florida Standards Assessment contract with American Institutes for Research, and distribute the funds to parties that incurred damages, if liquidated damages are applicable.

Educator Performance Accountability

The bill modifies components of educator performance evaluations for student performance, instructional practice, and professional and job responsibilities. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies educator performance evaluation components to require:
 - The student performance component to be at least one-third of the evaluation,

- The instructional practice component (or the instructional leadership component for school administrators) to constitute at least one-third of the evaluation, and
- The remainder of the evaluation to include other indicators of performance.
- Requires the student performance component to include growth or achievement data, the proportion of which may be determined by instructional assignment.
 - For courses associated with statewide, standardized assessments, requires school districts to measure student learning growth using the formulas approved by the Commissioner of Education and the standards for performance levels adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).
 - For grades and subjects not assessed by statewide, standardized assessments, requires each school district to measure student performance using a methodology determined by the district.
- Authorizes other indicators of performance to include, but not be limited to, professional and job responsibilities and other valid and reliable measures of instructional practice. Instructional personnel may also include peer reviews and objectively reliable survey information from students and parents based on teaching practices that are consistently associated with higher student achievement.
- Requires the DOE to provide a comparative analysis of performance evaluation results calculated by each school district to indicators of performance calculated by the DOE using the standards for performance levels adopted by the SBE.
- Requires instructional and administrative personnel who have been evaluated as less than effective to participate in the district's professional development programs.

School Accountability

The bill maintains the statutorily prescribed 2014-2015 school year transition to the Florida Standards Assessments, including the suspension of negative consequences associated with school grades and school improvement ratings. Specifically, the bill:

- Allows a school currently implementing a turnaround option to be released from the requirements if the school improves by at least one letter grade during the 2014-2015 transition year.
- Requires an independent verification of the psychometric validity of the statewide, standardized assessments to be completed before the 2014-2015 school grade results may be published and before student performance data may be used for evaluations.
- Requires student performance on the 2014-2015 statewide, standardized assessments to be linked to the 2013-2014 student performance expectations until an independent verification of the psychometric validity of the statewide, standardized assessments is provided for purposes of grade 3 ELA performance and high school graduation.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and took effect on April 14, 2015.

Vote: Senate 32-4; House 105-6